

## SYMPHONY REVIEW

[Marin Symphony / Sunday, February 28, 2010](#)

Alasdair Neale, conductor

Hoyt Smith, narrator



Marin Symphony Flutist Monica Daniel-Barker

# RICH ORCHESTRAL PORTRAITS IN MARIN SYMPHONY CONCERT

by [Donna Kline](#)

Sunday, February 28, 2010

The fourth chapter of the Marin Symphony's Season of the Scribe continued Feb. 28 when Alasdair Neale conducted an inspiring program of Debussy, Copland, and Tchaikovsky in the Marin Civic Center Auditorium.

Debussy's Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun began the concert with the Orchestra painting one of Debussy's most impressionistic and popular orchestral works. Principal flutist Monica Daniel-Barker opened the Debussy with an evocative solo, a descent to a tritone below the original pitch, and was joined by oboist Margot Golding, setting the mood of subtle shadings in Debussy's 1894 masterpiece. The familiar faun motif in its sylvan forest continued throughout, the theme being traded between members of the Orchestra. It was a feast of languorous melodies and shimmering orchestral playing.

In recognition of February as President's month, Mr. Neale led the Orchestra in

Copland's Lincoln Portrait, skillfully narrated by KDFC radio announcer Hoyt Smith. Composed in 1942 during the initial American entry into World War II, this short orchestral work is a musical portrait of America's 16th president, quoting Campdown races and Springfield Mountain among other songs.. It's a beautiful piece with Copland's discipline of simplicity and clarity setting the mood for Lincoln's simple but always elegant prose.

Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5, Op. 64, in four movements, completed the program. A passionately lyrical composition, the E Minor Symphony is from 1888 and mirrors the composer's fascination with man's fate. Working without a score, Mr. Neale paid special attention to the dotted rhythms, originally heard in the first subject group. The horn solo that begins the second movement (*dolce con molto espressione*), perhaps the most famous in the symphonic repertoire, was hauntingly played by Alan Camphouse. It later became the melody Tin Pan Alley's Moon Love, and Mr. Camphouse was subsequently joined by Ms. Golding's oboe in a poignant theme combined with strings.

Mr. Neale led the finale, a majestic march begun in the strings with a hectic rhythmic drive. The brass heralded the development, ending this momentous work in orchestral splendor.